



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 8
999 18TH STREET - SUITE 500
DENVER, CO 80202-2466

Ref: EPR-ER

Initial Pollution Report BEAVER WOOD PRODUCTS Columbia Falls, Flathead County, MT

I. HEADING

Date: 09/07/00
Site Name: Beaver Wood Products
From: Jim Knoy, OSC
To: Patty Smith, EPA Headquarters
POLREP No.: Initial #1

II. BACKGROUND

Site No.: L4
Response Authority: CERCLA
NPL Status: Non-NPL Site
Action Memorandum: 07/17/00
Start Date : 08/28/00
Completion Date: TBD

III. SITE INFORMATION

A. Incident Category

Time Critical, Fund-Lead, Removal Action

B. Site Description

1. Site Location

The Site is located on U.S. Highway 2E, approximately two miles east of Columbia Falls in Section 15, T.30N., R.20W., in Flathead County, Montana. It is bounded on the north by Highway 2, on the west by a residential development (Columbia Heights), on the south by electrical substations, on the northeast by an open

storage yard, and on the immediate southeast by residential property. The Site is a wood treatment facility and consists of an office building, process building, garage, storage shed, portable outhouse, two aboveground storage tanks, and staging areas for green wood and peeled posts. Active wood treatment operations are no longer occurring.

2. Description of Threat

Pentachlorophenol (PCP), low-level dioxin, and associated/used total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) have contaminated the soils around the dip tanks, in the wood drying/storage areas of a former post and pole treatment area, and other dust suppressant areas. A Removal Action was conducted at the Site by the Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) in 1991 when they erected a fence around the contaminated areas of the Site and placed six inches of gravel over and around the stained areas of the Site. At this time the fence is no longer present and the gravel capping has deteriorated to such an extent that there is substantial endangerment to employees/trespassers and the surrounding environment, including the immediate residential area to the west of the Site. PCP has been detected in monitoring wells.

C. Site Evaluation

In early spring 1999, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) reinspected the Site and discovered that the capped area had deteriorated and the fence had been removed, resulting in lack of protection of human health and the environment.

1.1 Surface and Subsurface Soil Sample Results:

In June and October of 1999, EPA's contractor (UOS) conducted soil sampling in areas previously designated by EPA and areas identified by the MDEQ inspection; high levels of PCP were found - exceeding the Montana Numeric Water Quality Standards Circular WQB-7 (September - 1999) for evaluation and regulation of surface water and groundwater, EPA Region IX Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs), and/or EPA Region III Risk-Based Screening Level of 48 mg/kg for industrial and 5.3 mg/kg for residential soil. PCP concentrations analyzed from surface soil sample results ranged from 0.2 to 10,000 mg/kg.

Soil boring (SB-01) was drilled in the area of the vats to a depth of 76 feet and PCP concentrations ranged from not detected to greater than 100 mg/kg. The highest detection of PCP (10,000 ppm) was collected from the wood chip pile where all of the stained soil, chips, and unwanted debris were piled over years.

PCP was also detected in the soil boring samples collected in the area between the two emptied PCP above ground storage tanks (ASTs), at a concentration of 100 mg/kg at the depth of 36 feet bgs.

Four Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds were detected in the heavily oil-stained areas near the east side of the Site (BW-G-07, BW-G-09, BW-G-10) and included PCP at 340 mg/kg, phenanthrene at 3.1 mg/kg, pyrene at 12 mg/kg, and chrysene at 5.2 mg/kg. Also, Diesel Range Organics (DRO) were found at a concentration of 26,000 mg/kg.

1.2 Groundwater Sample Results:

Four groundwater samples including a background sample were collected from existing monitor wells and two newly installed wells. The laboratory analysis detected a PCP concentration of 24 µg/L in the groundwater at the depth of 76 feet. All of the detected PCP levels in groundwater exceed the EPA maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PCP in groundwater of 1.0 µg/L. PCP was not detected in the MW-01 (background) and MW-04 monitoring wells.

IV. RESPONSE INFORMATION

A. Situation

1. Removal actions to date

On August 28, 2000, the OSC and EPA's removal contractor mobilized to the Site to prepare for development of a waste storage area. While mobilizing to the site, the extreme dryness and fire potential resulted in special considerations and restrictions. However, after EPA obtained an "emergency permit", the Removal Action was initiated. The Storage pad, is almost complete. It is one acre in size and will hold up to

10,000 yds of contaminated soil and debris.

2. Next Steps

Excavate the contaminated materials to the pad, and cover for the winter. Next summer, the pad will be extended to a total of 3 to 4 acres, and the waste will be spread out such that a bioremediation process can occur.

B. Enforcement

Costs will be determined and the Enforcement Specialist and Enforcement Attorney will make recommendations as to the potential for cost recovery.

V. COST INFORMATION

TBD